



UPDATE

Montana Department of Commerce

53rd Legislative Summary

Facing a record level deficit at the start, the 53rd Legislature upon adjournment created a projected \$42 million surplus. Overall, the tourism promotional efforts remained intact with only one reduction. HB2 appropriated an additional \$216,000 (biennium) from the Department of Commerce, Montana Promotion Division Program to the Montana Historical Society.

SB407 however, will have an affect on our tourism partners. This bill increases the Lodging Facility Use tax to 7% as of June 1, 2003. It also implements a 4% vehicle rental tax taking effect July 1, 2003 and increases the tax on cigarettes from \$.17 to \$.70 beginning May 1, 2003.

Lodging facilities should be ready to implement the additional tax as of June 1, 2003. (This will be only one month of the 2nd quarter collections). The bill also allows for a 5% vendor allowance on the 3% increase only. The bill reads as follows: "A person filing a timely return may claim a quarterly vendor allowance of each permitted location in the amount of 5% of the tax determined to be payable to the state, not to exceed \$1,000 per quarter."

Representative Jim Peterson added an amendment exempting facilities with previously signed summer contracts specifying the 4% rate from the increased tax. The amendment states: "Lodging facilities and campgrounds are exempt from the (new 3%) tax imposed by the bill until October 1, 2003, for contracts

entered into prior to when "SB 407" becomes law if the contract provides for a guaranteed charge for accommodations or campgrounds at the 4% rate."

The Revenue Department will mail information to lodging tax collectors by May 22, 2003. Contact Jeff Salandi at 406-444-5421, jsalandi@state.mt.us with questions.

National Tourism Week In May

Time to celebrate. May 10 - 18, 2003 is the 20th Annual National Tourism Week.

National Tourism Week is the opportunity to emphasize and promote a wider understanding of the importance of travel and tourism as a major U.S. industry, vital to the economic stability and growth of the nation (\$584 billion annual expenditures). Wednesday of National Tourism Week is celebrated as industry employee's "Wear Red Day" in recognition of the industry's 18 million jobs.

Did you know that Travel & Tourism is one of America's largest employers? Or that it is America's third largest retail sales industry? In fact, spending by resident and international travelers in the U.S. averaged \$1.5 billion a day, \$61 million an hour, \$1 million a minute, and \$17,000 a second. It is no wonder that

Montana wants a big piece of this pie. For more information log on to www.tia.org/tourism.

Time For TIIP Grant And CTAP

TIIP: Non-profit organizations or communities with a tourism-related "brick-n-mortar project" needing funding should pick up a 2003 TIIP Grant Application. TIIP-Tourism Infrastructure Investment Program-is a Montana Commerce Department, Travel Montana program that helps fund tourism-related projects that develop new attractions in Montana, preserve or restore important heritage and cultural sites and properties, add new or update existing equipment for tourism-related facilities and other physical tourism projects. Since its creation in 1995,

TIIP Grants have invested over \$1.66 million in to 35 Montana tourism projects valued at more than \$21 million.

CTAP: Montana communities interested in assessing the current role tourism plays in their local economic and social activity as well as planning for tourism's future in their area are invited to apply for the 2003-2004 session of the Community Tourism Assessment Program (CTAP).

CTAP is a 9-month community "self help" process facilitated by the Department of Commerce, Travel Montana and MSU Extension with assistance from UM's Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research. Local action committees work with the facilitators to analyze their current inventory of attractions and facilities,



Did You Know?

- Rhonda Fitzgerald, volunteer chair of the Whitefish Convention and Visitor Bureau was recently honored as "Citizen of the Year" at the Whitefish Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet. As an active member and leader of many organizations, she was chosen for her many contributions to the community.
- Averill's Flathead Lake Lodge in Bigfork has received the Mobil Travel Guide's Four-Star Award. The guide rates Averill's in the top 2 percent of the nation in the hospitality industry and is the only Montana hospitality business to ever earn the prestigious award.

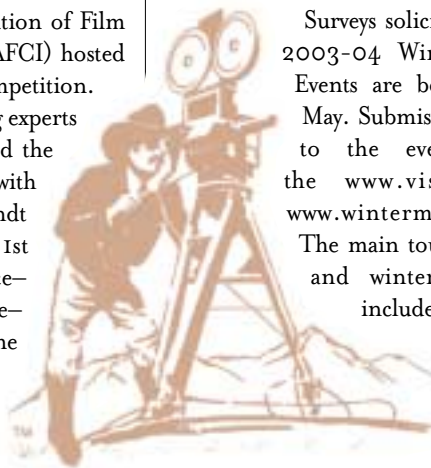
resident attitudes toward tourism, current visitor profiles, and identification of tourism projects that would benefit the area. Since 1993, 33 Montana communities have been involved in the process. Three communities are selected to participate in each session of CTAP.

Applications for both TIIP grants and CTAP participation are available electronically at <http://www.travelmontana.state.mt.us/OURPROGRAMS/TourismDevEd.htm>. For hard copies contact Victor Bjornberg, 406-841-2795, victor@visitmt.com. Deadline for applications is August 1, 2003.

Film Office— World Class Winners

The Montana Department of Commerce, Montana Film Office just attended the annual AFCI Locations Trade Show in Los Angeles. Program Manager Sten Iversen reports that the show generated quality leads and interest.

At the same time, the Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI) hosted its annual Marketing Awards competition. Film professionals and marketing experts judged submissions from around the globe and awarded Montana (with some help from their agency Wendt Kochman) three ribbons: 1st Place—Direct Mail, 1st Place—Promotional Items, 3rd Place—Black/White Ad Campaign. The Film Office also won two booth awards for best creative design and best theme.



Follow The Leads

International Travel

Find the latest international trade show leads on the intranet at www.travelmontana.state.mt.us in the "Overseas" section of "Our Programs". The password to access the leads is "overseas". The leads are from the Dublin Sales Mission, Go West Summit, BIT, ITB, Paris reception and the Benelux Roadshow.

Meetings/Conventions

Representatives from the Billings and Bozeman CVB's and Glacier Country recently attended Affordable Meetings Mid-America in Chicago. The show was a success and the lead information is available at <http://travelmontana.state.mt.us/OURPROGRAMS/MeetingsConventions.htm> or call Marlee Iverson at 406-841-2895, marlee@visitmt.com.

Get Your Listing:

Winter Calendar of Events

Surveys soliciting listings in the 2003-04 Winter Calendar of Events are being sent in early May. Submissions will be added to the events listings on the www.visitmt.com and www.wintermt.com websites. The main tourism-oriented fall and winter events will be included in a printed one-color brochure.

Only The Best For Our Dinos

Internationally renowned dinosaur scholar Professor Dong ZhiMing, of the Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology in Beijing, China will be visiting Montana this June and July as he supervises the summer dinosaur digs in Jordan. He will be in charge of all scientific study and field excavation of the dinosaurs.

Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided to disabled persons on request.

Calendar of Events

May

- 14-25 Cannes Film Festival (*Film Office*)
- 17-21 TIA's International Pow Wow, St. Louis (*International*)
- 28-30 "Confluence of Cultures" National Lewis & Clark Symposium, Missoula

June

- 1-3 Tourism Advisory Council Meeting, Kalispell-Red Lion Outlaw Hotel
- 11-12 Affordable Meetings West, San Jose, CA (*Convention/Group Travel*)
- 16 "Creating Visitor Packages" Workshop, Missoula (*Tourism Development*)
- 18 "Creating Visitor Packages" Workshop, Whitefish (*Tourism Development*)
- 23-27 TIA's See America Media Marketplace and UK sales calls, London (*International*)

For all of the latest Montana tourism industry information log on to:
travelmontana.state.mt.us.



Travel Montana • Montana Film Office
Montana Department of Commerce

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